

Press Release

July 6, 2006

**CHILD TRAFFICKING PROJECT BEGINS WORK ON FIRST SYSTEM OF CHILD PROTECTION IN ALBANIA**

Tirana, Albania—The Transnational Action against Child Trafficking (TACT) project held a ceremony in Tirana to acknowledge the start of the third phase of its project to combat child trafficking and build the first system of child protection in Albania. Donors participating in the event included representatives from USAID, Sida, UNICEF, the Oak Foundation, the Norwegian Embassy, the US Embassy and the Greek Embassy.

TACT3 is a \$3 million project, which will be implemented from June 2006 to 2009 by three non-governmental organizations, Terre des hommes (Tdh - Switzerland), Arsis (Greece), and Amarodrom (Albania) in partnership with the Albanian Ministries of Interior, Labor, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, and Education. Under TACT3, Amarodrom will work to develop child protection mechanisms within the Roma community, while Greek NGO partner, Arsis will implement street activities with children at-risk of trafficking in Athens, Thessalonica, and Tirana. Save the Children Albania and UNICEF will also collaborate with Tdh in the development of up to five child protection units in Albania. Tdh will also facilitate operational partnerships with Albanian and Greek civil society to accompany state efforts, advocate and monitor changes in policies, and provide services to victims of trafficking and children at-risk.

Today, TACT protects more than 400 suspected child victims of trafficking. In the last three months alone, 382 newly detected children at-risk of trafficking have benefited from services provided by TACT teams and its partners in several of Albania's districts. TACT3 moves beyond the efforts of the previous TACT project's interventions (prevention, protection, assisted voluntary return, reintegration and coordination) to mobilize community members, municipalities, and schools in Albania's emerging child protection systems. The progressive takeover by community leaders, NGOs and state institutions is planned to sustain national and community "child protection nets" necessary to avoid the resurgence of massive child trafficking by the end of the project.

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